

thousand and one traditions of Pharisaical observance. Yes, to be acquainted with Pharisaism at its best, will give us an idea of the force of the words, "I lived a Pharisee."

A Persecutor.—Those who stoned Stephen, it is said, laid their mantles at the feet of a young man named Saul. This is our introduction to him in the New Testament. Though a young man, he is yet old enough to share in the counsels of the Sanhedrim. He became at once a willing and most zealous executor of the designs of the chief priests against the Christians. He was so bitter a persecutor of the disciples of Jesus that in Damascus he was known as the DESTROYER of those who were of THIS WAY. He, being exceedingly mad, made havoc of the church, sparing neither the aged nor youthful, and respecting neither the sacredness of home nor sex. But why fault the man? He felt it to be his supreme duty to punish heretics! The religion of his fathers was at stake and that because of a false Messiah! He could not rest. Others might look on with bewildered feelings, or breathe out secret threats, but as for himself, he must lead against these deceivers and if need be, drive them to death. The following references to the Acts and his own writings illustrate Saul's spirit and activity as a persecutor. In Acts 8:3, we have a very striking figure. Here it is declared that "Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging forth both men and women, committed them to prison." But Saul was not content in WASTING the churches of Judea and Galilee. So he pushes across the borders of Palestine, intending even to go to Damascus. This city, we are told, was the home of 50000 Jews.

Here, too, there were disciples of Jesus Christ. The Sanhedrim claimed authority over the Jews even beyond their own territorial limits. So Saul started to Damascus armed with authority, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter" against those whom he might chance to find of "This Way." His reputation had preceded him to Damascus. Ananias, a disciple of this city, knew something of him, for when urged in a vision to go to meet one, Saul of Tarsus he replies: "Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name." Acts 9:13. And those who heard him proclaim Jesus soon after in the synagogue of the city were amazed and said, "Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havoc of them which call upon this name?" Acts 9:23. In writing to the

Corinthians, he declares himself to have been one who "PERSECUTED THE CHURCH OF GOD." I Cor. 15:9. How bitter this persecution was may be seen from Gal. 1:9. For ye have heard * * * how that BEYOND MEASURE I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it." See also Gal. 1:23. Or something of his spirit may be read in the words of his own speech (Acts 22:4) before his countrymen. "I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women." And before Agrippa he declares that he did many things contrary to Jesus, shutting up many in prison "and when they were put to death, I gave my vote against them." See Acts 16:9, 10; also Phil. 3:6; I Tim. 1:13.

THAT PROPOSED "UNION."

P. J. BROWN.

TO BROTHER D. C. MOOMAW.

My Esteemed Brother:—Your article in BRETHREN EVANGELIST No. 17, has attracted my attention to a sufficient degree to cause me to offer a few remarks. I do so for the special reason that you say, "And do we err in estimating favorably the weight of brother P. J. Brown's counsels?" No, you do not err, in this, you may count on, not only my counsel, in favor of the proposed union, but on my active co-operation as well, provided always, that no proposition be entertained as a basis of union that would in any wise tend to deprive me of my inalienable rights, civil and ecclesiastical.

But here I am afraid the trouble would begin, and it is a question of no small import with me whether we, on our own part could agree as to the extent of these rights, and I am frank to confess, that I look with much concern upon the trend toward the camp of universalism on the part of some of the writers for our church organ, the (EVANGELIST.) I will venture the assertion that among those you name Holsinger, Shaver, Gnagoy, Beer, Brown, with yourself, we could meet a like number of the representative men of the G. B. Brethren and bring about a reconciliation. But when we remember that the ultra advocates of the order are yet legions in their camp, and that the ultra advocates for "less church and more Christ," "religious autonomy," absolute and unbridled congregationalism and all this tendency to universalism are legions too, and that they are in our camp, I confess that I am somewhat shakey as to the propriety of even making the attempt you propose. It is my opinion that the G. B. Brethren would naturally want to know, *what* and with *whom* they

are asked to unite, and I submit in all candor who among us would be able to give them a satisfactory answer? Some one no doubt will say, "tell them we are a *Gospel alone* people." Now then what are they to understand by that? There would be but one way to find out, and that would be to search our record and see what we have been teaching. Here they would find unlimited congregationalism, even down to individualism, in short all that is taught in the universalist church. Do you suppose they would want to unite with such a body? I doubt it very seriously.

Then on the other hand, we would want to be sure that the body we are asked to unite with is not the same despotic one we separated from in 1882. I do not doubt your statement as to what they told you, but the question with me is, did those men whom you refer to speak officially? Allow me to remind you that D. L. Miller is hardly a representative man when it comes to the "order." I love and admire him and all like him, and if we can find enough in their camp like him to control their action, I say by all means form a union and let the result be the sloughing off of the unreasonable and uncontrollable portions of both sides—theirs to the old orderites—ours to the universalists. By this means there could be a church founded upon the Gospel alone, with a full and fair understanding as to what *is* and what *is not Gospel* on all the practicable parts of the Gospel, while those which are not practicable, that is, incapable of being practiced or performed should be left to every man's conscience so long as his understanding of them is so shaped as to cause no hindrance to the Gospel, which latter question should be decided by the congregation, but never denying the right of appeal. All this you will perceive means work, yes, much work, and it will be well to understand this before anything is attempted, as I for one, will never go into any organization blindfolded. When I entered the G. B. church forty-five years ago, I did not know that I would be required to obey a whole batch of clothes' religion, and when I helped to organize the Brethren church in 1883 I did not understand that the Gospel alone creed would allow every one to interpret and practice the Gospel according to his own fancy, and that nobody was to be responsible to any body else in faith and practice.

May 5.

THERE will always be growth in the church when the leaders have faith enough to provide for it.